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CONSTITUTION,  
BY-LAWS,  
AND  
RULES OF ORDER  
OF THE  
SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS'  
NATIONAL UNION LEAGUE,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Organized September 8th, 1865.

WASHINGTON :  
GIDEON & PEARSON, PRINTERS.  
1865.

Comptroller of  
H. C. H. H. H.

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BY-LAWS,

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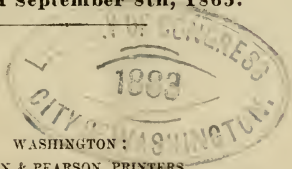
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# INDEX.

## CONSTITUTION.

Preamble .....	3
Article 1—Name.....	3
“ 2—Officers .....	4
“ 3—Duties of Officers.....	4
“ 4—Membership .....	5
“ 5—Benefits .....	6
“ 6—Committees .....	6
“ 7—Meetings.....	6
“ 8—Violations of Constitution.....	6
“ 9—Amendments.....	7

## BY-LAWS.

Article 1—Committees.....	9
“ 2—Meetings.....	10
“ 3—Revenue.. ..	11
“ 4—Trial of Members.....	11
“ 5—Amendments.....	11
Order of Business.....	12
Rules of Order .....	12

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# CONSTITUTION.

## PREAMBLE.

*Whereas*, We, the undersigned, discharged soldiers and sailors of the United States, being desirous of forming an organization having for its object the maintenance of our best interests, and the fostering of that heroic spirit which led us forth to battle in a sacred cause, and to secure to ourselves a proper recognition of our just claims, among which are the following :

*First.* To procure for honorably discharged soldiers and sailors, who possess sufficient qualifications, the preference in all situations in the gift of the federal, state, and municipal governments.

*Second.* To obtain from government an equalization of the bounties of the soldiers of 1861 and 1862, with the bounties paid to those enlisting later in the war.

*Third.* To procure employment in the general pursuits of life for our comrades who may need such assistance.

*Fourth.* To urge upon the government and the people the just claims of honorably discharged soldiers, and the widows and orphans of our fallen comrades, that a speedy settlement of their claims may be made, and that the condition of widows and orphans may be ameliorated.

*Fifth.* To extend to members, who, by sickness or other misfortune, are prevented from pursuing their usual avocations, such aid as will alleviate their suffering, and for the purpose of more effectually carrying the same into effect, we do hereby ordain and publish the following Constitution, and hereby solemnly pledge ourselves to a hearty and earnest support of the same.

## ARTICLE I.

### *Name.*

This association shall be styled the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League, of Washington, D. C.

## ARTICLE II.

*Officers.*

SEC. 1. The officers of this League shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and Sergeant-at-Arms.

SEC. 2. The above-named officers shall be elected semi-annually, by ballot—a majority of all the votes cast being necessary to secure a choice

SEC. 3. The regular elections shall take place at the last regular meetings in December and June of each year, and the officers elect shall be installed at the first regular meetings in January and July of each year.

## ARTICLE III.

*Duties of Officers.*

SEC. 1. It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all the meetings of this association, to maintain order and enforce the rules, and perform such other duties as the League may require of him.

SEC. 2. It shall be the duty of the Vice-President to act in conjunction with the President in maintaining order. Should the President be absent the Vice-President will officiate in his place.

SEC. 3. It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary to keep a record of the proceedings of this body, attest by his signature all action of the League, all bills drawn upon the Treasurer, and approved by the President, and perform such other duties as may from time to time be required of him.

SEC. 4. It shall be the duty of the Corresponding Secretary to conduct all the correspondence of the League, attend to the printing, and perform such other duties as may be required of him.

SEC. 5. It shall be the duty of the Financial Secretary to collect the initiation fees, dues, and fines from the members, and pay the same to the Treasurer, taking his receipt therefor. He shall notify members who are in

arrears for dues, fees, or fines, and shall make a monthly report of all funds collected by him and paid over to the Treasurer.

SEC. 6. The Treasurer shall receive and deposit with some responsible banker all moneys of this League, pay all bills audited by the Finance Committee, if approved by the President, and attested by the Recording Secretary. He shall also render a monthly report of the finances of the League, and shall keep his bank-book open to the inspection of the Finance Committee, and at the expiration of his term of office he shall deliver to his successor, or such other person as the League may designate, all moneys, books, and other property of the League in his possession; and before he shall enter upon the discharge of his duties he shall execute a writing with two vouchers, in such sum as from time to time shall be deemed sufficient by the Finance Committee, for the faithful performance of his duties.

SEC. 7. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall assist the President in maintaining order, and perform such other duties as may from time to time be required of him.

SEC. 8. Every member of this League who shall be elected to any office, shall, before entering upon the duties of said office, assent to the following obligation:

I ——— do solemnly promise, in the presence of the witnesses here assembled, that I will faithfully support and maintain the Constitution of the "Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League," and that I will faithfully perform the duties of ——— of this League to the best of my ability.

## ARTICE IV.

### *Membership.*

SEC. 1. The only qualification necessary to become a member of this League shall be an honorable discharge from the military or naval service of the United States.

SEC. 2. Every person becoming a member of this League shall, at the time of his admission to membership, pay to the Financial Secretary the sum of one dollar and

subscribe to this Constitution and By-laws, and shall at the same time receive a certificate of membership, to be signed by the President and Recording Secretary.

SEC. 3. Honorary membership may be conferred upon such persons, not eligible to regular membership, as the League may determine upon.

## ARTICLE V.

### *Benefits.*

SEC. 1. The fact of a member of this League being sick or in want coming to the knowledge of any member, the case shall by him be reported to the League, and the Relief Committee shall examine into the case and report such action as to them shall seem proper to be adopted.

## ARTICLE VI.

### *Committees.*

SEC. 1. The standing committees of this League shall consist of an Executive Committee, a Finance Committee, a Committee on Membership, a Relief Committee, Committee on Employment, a Room Committee, and a Committee on Statistics.

## ARTICLE VII.

### *Meetings.*

SEC. 1. The meetings of this League shall be held once in each week, at such time and place as the By-laws shall prescribe.

## ARTICLE VIII.

### *Violations of the Constitution.*

SEC. 1. Any member found guilty of violating this Constitution, or any part thereof, shall be expelled from the League, provided two-thirds of the members present concur.



SEC. 2. Any member found guilty of any improper or criminal conduct, or conduct having a tendency to bring the League into disrepute, shall be expelled, fined, suspended, or reprimanded, as the committee before which he may be tried shall direct: *Provided*, That two-thirds of the members present concur, and no fine shall exceed the sum of five dollars.

SEC. 3. Any member who shall refuse or neglect to pay such fees, dues, or other payments that may from time to time become due after he has been notified by the Financial Secretary that such fees, dues, or other payments were due, shall be suspended until such payments shall be made; and in case he shall refuse to comply with the instructions of the Financial Secretary for three months, he shall be dropped from the roll.

## ARTICLE IX.

### *Amendments.*

SEC. 1. This Constitution may be amended at any time in the following manner, viz :

A resolution to amend shall be submitted at a regular meeting. The President will refer said resolution to a committee of five members, who shall report thereon at the next regular meeting, which report shall lie upon the table until the succeeding regular meeting, when, if two-thirds of the members present concur, it shall be adopted.



# BY-LAWS.

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## ARTICLE I.

### *Committees.*

SEC. 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of five members, of which the President and Recording Secretary shall be *ex officio* Chairman and Secretary. It shall be the duty of this committee to meet at least once in each week to take into consideration the good and welfare of the League. They will, from *time to time*, make such suggestions to the League as they may think fitted to advance the interests of the cause.

SEC. 2. The Finance Committee shall consist of three members, to be appointed by the President, and it shall be the duty of this committee to audit all bills presented to the League for payment, to examine and report upon the monthly reports of the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, and perform such other duties as the Constitution or the League may require of them.

SEC. 3. The Committee on Membership shall consist of three members, to be appointed by the President. It shall be the duty of this committee to consider and report upon the eligibility of candidates for membership, and to perform such other duties as the Constitution or the League may require of them.

SEC. 4. The Committee on Employment shall consist of five members, to be appointed by the President. It shall be the duty of this committee to keep a record of the name and occupation of all members desiring employment, and they shall use their best endeavors to procure employment adapted to the qualification of all members who require such aid.

SEC. 5. The Relief Committee shall consist of five members, to be appointed by the President. It shall be the duty of this committee to wait upon any member who may be sick, and if such member is found to be in need they shall make such recommendations to the League as will, in their judgment, relieve the suffering member, and perform such other duties as the Constitution or the League may require of them.

SEC. 6. The Room Committee shall consist of three members, to be appointed by the President. It shall be the duty of this committee to see that the hall of the League is properly lighted, warmed, and ventilated, and they shall, upon an approved requisition of the Secretaries, procure such stationery as the League may require, and perform such other duties as the Constitution or the League may require of them.

SEC. 7. The Committee on Statistics shall consist of five members, of which the Vice-President and Corresponding Secretary shall be *ex officio* Chairman and Secretary. It shall be the duty of this committee to collect and preserve an accurate military history of each member of the *League*; preserve a copy of all records, documents, and publications of the League, as well as all letters received by the League, with copies of the replies to those of importance.

The papers in charge of this committee shall be so preserved and filed that at any time a full and complete history of the League from its organization may be compiled therefrom.

## ARTICLE II.

### *Meetings.*

SEC. 1. The regular meetings of this League shall be held at their hall, on every Monday evening, at 7½ p. m.

SEC. 2. Whenever fifteen members shall request the President in writing, it shall be his duty to call a special meeting of the League.

SEC. 3. Fifteen members of this League shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

## ARTICLE III.

*Revenue.*

SEC. 1. The initiation fee of this League shall be one dollar, and the regular dues twenty-five cents per month.

SEC. 2. Any officer of this League who may be absent from a regular meeting shall, unless he can give a satisfactory excuse, pay to the League the sum of one dollar; and if absent for three successive meetings his seat may be declared vacant, and a new officer shall be elected.

## ARTICLE IV.

*Trial of Members.*

Whenever a charge shall have been preferred against any member, it shall be the duty of the President to appoint a committee of five members to examine the case of the offending member.

The committee shall give the accused four days' notice of the time and place of meeting, and shall furnish him with a copy of the charges, and the names of the witnesses.

The secretary of this committee shall keep a record of its proceedings and of the testimony taken.

The committee, after having examined all the details of the case, shall recommend such action to the League as the circumstances of the case require.

## ARTICLE V.

*Amendments.*

These by-laws may be altered or amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting of the League.

## ORDER OF BUSINESS.

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1. Calling the meeting to order by the President.
  2. Calling the roll of officers.
  3. Reading of the record of the last meeting.
  4. Proposals for Membership.
  5. Reports of Special Committees.
  6. Reports of Standing Committees.
  7. Unfinished business.
  8. New business.
  9. Good and welfare of the League.
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## RULES OF ORDER.

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1. The President shall state every question properly presented to the League, and before putting it to vote, shall ask, "Is the League ready for the question?" Should no member offer to speak he shall rise to put it; and after he has risen no member shall be permitted to speak without his permission. While he is putting a question, or addressing the League, no one shall walk out of or across the room, or entertain any private discourse.

2. The President shall have a casting vote in case of a tie, but in ordinary shall not vote. He shall announce all votes and decisions. His decisions on points of order shall not be debatable, unless entertaining doubts upon the subject, he invite discussion.

3. He may speak to points of order in preference to other members of the League, rising from his seat for that purpose, and shall decide questions of order, subject to

an appeal to the League by any two members, which appeal shall not be debatable.

4. When an appeal is taken from the decision of the President, he shall put the question thus— "Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained?"

5. A motion must be seconded, and afterwards repeated from the Chair, or read aloud before it is debated. A motion shall be reduced to writing if the Recording Secretary shall request it.

6. All resolutions shall be submitted in writing.

7. When a member speaks or offers a motion, he shall rise in his place and respectfully address the President, and shall not proceed to speak until he is recognized by the President; he shall confine himself to the question under consideration, and avoid personality or unbecoming language.

8. When a member is called to order, he shall take his seat until the point is determined.

9. When two or more members rise to speak at the same time, the presiding officer shall decide who is entitled to the floor.

10. Any member having made a motion may withdraw it, with leave of his second, before it is debated, but not afterwards, without leave of the League.

11. No member shall speak more than twice, nor longer than ten minutes each time, on any question, without leave of the League, which leave shall be granted or refused without debate.

12. While a member is speaking no one shall interrupt him, except for the purpose of calling him to order, or asking of the presiding officer leave to explain. A member allowed "to explain" shall only have the right to explain an actual misunderstanding of language, and shall be strictly prohibited from going into debate on the merits of the case.

13. For any member speaking to impeach the motives of a fellow member, or treat him with personal disrespect, or to pass between him and the Chair while he is speaking, shall be deemed a violation of order, which may incur the censure of the presiding officer, or of the League.

14. It shall be the duty of the presiding officer, and the privilege of any member of the League, to call a member to order who violates an established rule of order.

15. Any conversation, by whispering or otherwise, which is calculated to disturb a member while speaking, or hinder the transaction of business, shall be deemed a violation of order, and, if persisted in, shall incur censure.

16. When the decision of a question is doubted, the presiding officer will cause the votes in the affirmative and negative to be counted.

17. When a question is before the League, the only motion in order shall be, 1st, to adjourn; 2d, to lay on the table; 3d, the previous question; 4th, to postpone to a day certain; 5th, to commit; 6th, to amend; 7th, to postpone indefinitely; which several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are arranged, and the first three to be decided without debate.

18. A motion to adjourn shall always be in order, except, 1st, when a member is in possession of the floor; 2d, while the yeas and nays are being called; 3d, when the members are voting; 4th, when adjournment was the last preceding motion; or 5th, when it has been decided that the previous question shall be taken.

19. When the previous question is moved and seconded by one-third of the members present, the main question shall be put, and all further motions, amendments, and debates shall be concluded, and the question shall be put without delay. If the question has been amended, the question shall be taken on the amendment first. If more than one amendment has been made, the last made amendment shall take precedence in the vote.

20. A motion to amend an amendment shall be in order, but to amend an amendment to an amendment shall not be entertained.

21. When the presiding officer has commenced taking a vote, no further debate or remark shall be admitted, unless a mistake has been made, in which case the



mistake shall be rectified, and the presiding officer shall recommence taking the vote.

22. When any blank is to be filled by the names of persons, a vote shall be taken on the names in the order of their nomination ; but when a blank is to be filled by any sum of money, or time, proposed, the question shall be first put on the largest sum, and the most remote time.

23. A question may be reconsidered any time during the session, or at the first regular session held thereafter ; but a motion for reconsideration being once made and decided in the negative, shall not be renewed.

24. A motion to reconsider must be made and seconded by those who voted in the majority. No question shall be reconsidered more than once, nor shall a vote to reconsider be reconsidered. To reconsider any resolution, &c., the decision of which has officially passed out of the League, shall not be in order.

25. A motion to repeal or rescind a resolution shall be submitted in writing.

26. The yeas and nays upon any question before the League may be called for by two members, and upon the assent of one-fifth of the members present shall be so taken.

27. In taking the yeas and nays the Recording Secretary shall call the roll and record the yeas and nays ; after the roll has been called the result shall be read aloud to rectify mistakes, if any, after which the Recording Secretary shall hand the vote to the President who shall announce the same.

28. In voting by yeas and nays all present in regular standing in the League must vote, unless excused by the League, but no member shall vote who was not in the room at the time the question was put. A motion to excuse shall be decided without debate.

29. The reading of any paper called for relating to the subject under debate shall always be in order.

30. All reports of committees, except reports of progress, shall be made in writing and signed by a majority.

31. When a majority report is followed by a report from

the minority of a committee, the former, after being read shall lie upon the table until the latter is presented; after which, on motion, either may be considered.

32. When a report has been read it shall be considered as properly before the League, without a motion to accept.

33. The member first named in the appointment of committee shall be Chairman of the same, and shall call the committee to meet at such time and place as he may elect; but when thus convened, the Committee may elect its own Chairman and Secretary.

34. The above Rules of Order may be altered or amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting of the League.







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